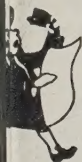


APRIL 20, 1954  
814th BROADCAST

# Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

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## How Well Do Our Schools Teach Our Children?

Moderator, JAMES F. MURRAY, Jr.

### Speakers

H. GORDON HULLFISH

ALBERT LYND



—COMING—

—May 4, 1954—

**What Does Southeast Asia Mean to  
The Free World?**

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# Town Meeting

VOLUME 19

No. 51



## How Well Do Our Schools Teach Our Children?



The Broadcast of April 6, 1954, from 9:00 to 9:45 p.m., over the American Broadcasting Company Radio Network, came to you from Jamestown High School, Jamestown, N. Y., under the auspices of the Chamber of Commerce and the Junior Chamber of Commerce.



The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of views presented.

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**ALBERT LYND**—Author of "Quackery in the Public Schools." Mr. Lynd was born in San Francisco and educated in Oakland, California. He earned his own living from the time he was fourteen years old, and completed high school work at evening school. Having won the Harvard Club of San Francisco Scholarship he went on to receive his A.B. and A.M., and graduated magna cum laude in history and a member of the Phi Beta Kappa. Mr. Lynd received a grant from the Belgian-American Educational Association and spent his time largely in research in medieval history at the University of Louvain and the Royal Library of Brussels.

His teaching experience includes a post as teaching assistant at Harvard University in the department of history and government; and then as instructor in history at Stanford University in California; also shorter intervals of teaching at the College of the City of New York, and at Northeastern University in Boston.

He resigned from his last teaching post to return to business. Mr. Lynd was with the advertising firm of Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc. of New York and Boston, and served as copy director in the Boston office.

Before business required his moving to New York, Mr. Lynd served two terms on the School Board of Sharon, Massachusetts.

At the present time he is copy director of the advertising firm of Lynn Baker, Incorporated. Author of articles in *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Fortune* magazines, he has recently written a book entitled, "Quackery in the Public Schools."

**PROFESSOR H. GORDON HULLFISH**—Professor of Education, Ohio State University; President of the Progressive Education Association. A native of Washington, D.C., Dr. Hullfish first attended the University of Illinois, where he received his bachelor of arts degree in 1921. As a University Scholar, he then attended Ohio State and earned his master's and doctorate

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# How Well Do Our Schools Teach Our Children?

**Announcer:**

Town Meeting tonight originates from Jamestown, New York, under auspices of the senior and junior Chambers of Commerce. Situated on the southeastern end of beautiful Lake Chautauqua, Jamestown has become the business and financial center of an extensive area of southwestern New York and northwestern Pennsylvania.

Jamestown gained its early manufacturing reputation in the field of fine wood furniture, but is equally famous for many other diversified industries, including metal office equipment, automatic voting machines, ball bearings, automobile radiators and fine tools.

Basically a Scandinavian community, Jamestown also is rated as one of the nation's prime retail markets, with a population of more than 43,000 which is increased greatly each summer by thousands of vacationers who come to the world famous Chautauqua institution and resorts in the area. The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce, since 1915, has been the focal point of industry and community activity.

Now to preside over tonight's discussion, here is Town Meeting's moderator, James F. Murray, Jr. Mr. Murray.

**Moderator Murray:**

It's a pleasure to originate Town Meeting tonight from this fine auditorium of the Jamestown High School, and we salute the annual meeting of the Jamestown Chamber of Commerce. It's the opinion of many thoughtful Americans as we gather here this evening that public education in the United States may be about to face a crisis of profound proportions. It is not alone the problems engendered by inadequate facilities in schools, or

the diminishing ranks of our underpaid teachers, or even charges of subversion leveled from some quarters against certain textbooks or the professors who may have written them.

Even more serious and fundamental is the complaint which now clamors for attention in an ever-widening controversy. It is the growing dissatisfaction among many parents and educators alike as to the *content* and the form of public education itself. Demands appear on every side for a sober reappraisal of *what* is being taught in our schools and *how* it is being taught. With more than thirty million young people enrolled in public educational systems throughout our nation, this is a problem which concerns us all.

No one would deny that the years ahead will burden the next generation with problems and decisions more complex and exacting than ever before faced by members of free society. Our children must be fortified with the highest quality education we can give them. It is therefore pertinent to inquire whether, as some claim, we have been substituting know-how for knowledge, whether we have indulged in experimentation at the possible expense of our historic norms and values, and whether we should continue to search for new formulae or to be content with the old.

These are problems which face us all, and tonight America's Town Meeting is privileged to present two experts in the field of education to discuss these problems with us. Our first speaker is Dr. H. Gordon Hullfish, Professor of Education, Ohio State University, and President of the Progressive Education Association. Dr. Hullfish.



**Dr. Hullfish:**

Mr. Moderator, ladies and gentlemen of Jamestown. Our question tonight throws us into an area of speculation. No one commands the facts on which an unqualified answer may rest. Yet we are not without resources to which opinion may be related. American education is heavily burdened, and the enormity of the task grows day by day. In Ohio, for instance, 206,779 babies were born in 1952 in contrast to the 95,783 born in 1933. There will be twice as many eighteen-year-olds in Ohio by 1970 as there are now. Our shortage of teachers nationally approaches a status of scandal.

In New York alone it has been estimated that one billion dollars is needed to provide facilities for the growing school population. The discrepancies among the states in their abilities to support education are well known. Further, school people are harassed today by charges leveled against them by certain critics whose purpose is not to improve the work of the schools. If we assume for the moment that the purpose of public education is to teach the three R's, we must conclude that our schools are doing their job as well as earlier schools did. Many studies substantiate this.

This achievement is the more striking because of the change in the school population that followed our determination to educate all young people at public expense through the high school years. If we shift our sights, however, and accept as the purpose of education *the development of intellectual competence*, we discover that very little has been proved, except defensively and negatively, when it is shown that the present school does as well, or better or worse, as earlier schools in the development

of routine skills or in the transmission of uncriticized fact. All that is shown is that old teaching habits carry over into the present.

The evidence is not at hand to determine how well we teach each child, in so far as his capacity permits, to think independently. Yet I am willing to speculate, on the basis of a considerable acquaintance the country over with those whose professional lives are devoted to making certain that children today have a *better go at life* than did the children of yesterday. Progressively, our children are being better served educationally and by individuals whose intellectual concern it is to see to it that they are steadily better served. American education is burdened heavily, but American educators have shown no disposition to quail under loads they should not be asked to carry, nor under fire that is frequently carelessly directed.

**Mr. Murray:**

Thank you, Dr. Hullfish. Our second distinguished guest this evening is Mr. Albert Lynd, businessman, lecturer, and author of *Quackery in the Public Schools*. Dr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:**

Mr. Moderator, ladies and gentlemen. I am no doctor. How well do our schools teach our children? There are more than thirty million children in no more than 150,000 public schools. Obviously, some of them are much better taught than others. I believe that those children who have well educated teachers are better taught than those who have poorly educated teachers. And by a well educated teacher I mean one who has some acquaintance with the language and the literature, the art and the science, of the civilization in which he lives—some education, in short, beyond his tech-

nical training in teaching. And nobody denies the need for some such technical training.

There are many teachers and administrators who are cultivated and well educated men and women. There are also others, and this is my observation on long service on the school board, there are also others who are ill educated, but they seem to have no more difficulty acquiring degrees and certificates in education than the well educated. The causes of this situation seem to be several. One would be the shamefully low pay offered to teachers, which undoubtedly drives away many able candidates, except those who are heroes and heroines. And their number is limited by nature.

A second would be the excessive emphasis on courses in education with a capital E, which distracts too many teachers from their own personal education. And next, the movement called Progressive Education is very influential in many teachers colleges. It operates in an atmosphere of disdain, if not of contempt, for so-called traditional subject matter. It is hard to believe that fundamentals will be well taught by a teacher who has no respect for anything labeled fundamental.

Progressive Education presents a further problem. It regards education as a process of meeting a child's needs. I assume that need was always the basis of education, allegedly—need to go to heaven, or need to get a job, or what not. But in progressivism, quite apart from the question whether a child's deepest needs are those which he immediately feels, I believe that a teacher is not competent to judge the relation between literature or pure mathematics or what not to a child's needs if the teacher himself is uneducated in those dis-

ciplines. For example, a teacher who knows no foreign languages is not in a position to judge whether the real needs of my child or your child would be better met by teaching him French or by letting him make fudge.

Finally, the theories of Progressive Education derive from a philosophy which, whatever its merits (and as a reader of philosophy I have great respect for it), but whatever its merit, is highly controversial, is little understood by parents and even by teachers, and has certainly not been candidly submitted to the community for approval. The most real need of a child, the most real need of any human, is a philosophical problem, and the advocates of the progressivist reform deal with it in terms of their own philosophy. I doubt that it is the prevailing philosophy of the American community. Naturally, anyone may claim that our children are well taught if he sets up a new philosophy, with new canons of what good teaching is. And that's the rub.

**Mr. Murray:** Dr. Hullfish, as president of the Progressive Education Association, I am sure you must have some comments to make on the criticism of Mr. Lynd.

**Dr. Hullfish:** I most certainly do. I don't have too much time. We're only on the air 45 minutes. But I would like to note, Mr. Lynd, that as I have observed education, that educators of quite diverse views have discovered that what we know about learning is of such importance to them that they adopt progressive practices in order to better advance their purposes. And do you not oversimplify just a bit by tying this movement in its entirety to a single philosophy?

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:** On progressive



methods, I think practically everybody is agreed that the classroom reforms of Progressive Education have been wholesome, the releasing of the child from a jail-like atmosphere and so forth. That is not the basis of my criticism of Progressive education. My criticism revolves around a new definition of a child's need, a need that assumes that the business of the school is not to train his intellectual faculty. It is, so to speak, to train him as a monistic, biological organism, to train his habits and impulses for social living. That is derived from a philosophy with which I disagree. No one need agree with it, or with me, but who agrees with the official philosophy of Progressive Education?

**Dr. Hullfish:** Of course I am very much interested, Mr. Lynd, since I do sit in a position of being an officer of this association, to know that there is this official philosophy, that there is this official position. I think you're quite right. I am not trying to duck your statement at all. I think you're quite right that the point of view which is associated with the name of John Dewey, who you did not specifically mention but whom we all know professionally, at least, to have had a large influence upon American education, that the point of view associated with Mr. Dewey does indeed come at this conception of the intellectual approach to life somewhat differently than you have stated it.

But I don't quite find myself able to agree, as your statement presents itself to me, that this philosophy is not interested in the development of intelligence. I had assumed that this was the center and the heart of the matter.

**Mr. Lynd:** The difference is considerable. If you take a head-on question like, Is trigonometry good

for a boy? Is Latin good for a boy? If you follow Mr. Dewey and Mr. Kilpatrick, you will answer it in an entirely different context than if you do not follow Mr. Dewey and Mr. Kilpatrick.

**Dr. Hullfish:** This is perfectly right, but is not the question more a question of fact than what you like or what I like?

**Mr. Lynd:** No, it is not. It is not a question of fact; it is a question of philosophy. You may oppose Professor Dewey. For example, you may oppose Professor Hocking who talks about the teaching of mental arithmetic. He mentions it in speaking of the early days at the Shady Hill School. He said learning by doing, which had its place, had no place in this operation, because I believe children can be taught, and will see the beauty of numbers as they see the beauty of music—a premise that is almost entirely inadmissible in the Kilpatrick theory of education.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, gentlemen, before we divulge or rather plunge too deeply into the philosophical aspect of this question, I wonder if we could hold it in abeyance for a moment and have your views as to what you feel to be the primary function and responsibility of our public schools. Then perhaps you can return to the way those functions would be carried out in the light of your ideas of Progressive Education, or the contrary feeling on traditional forms of education. What do you feel to be the primary function, the obligation, of our public schools? **Dr. Hullfish:**

**Dr. Hullfish:** Well, I shall try to address myself to that without being too complex. I would like to say, first of all, that no public schools exist except as indeed they are supported by the public. And

in this sense public education has a task of quite large responsibility. It ought never to be, in the first instance, disturbed by criticism which is leveled against it. There must be criticism if the public is alive. There must be criticism, it seems to me, if the school is alive, because if this were not so the school would merely be taking its orders quite passively from the community, and if there were an official position within the community then most certainly our schools would be in the same position the schools are in all totalitarian countries.

We are not a totalitarian country; we are not a people of a single tradition; we are a people who came together from many backgrounds and we are trying to work out a life in what we view as our democratic tradition, and we are trying to keep that tradition alive. I see, therefore, two things, perhaps three which are of large significance. First of all, I think that we need to understand that the school has the responsibility, using the best that we know about learning, to see that each child that comes to the school has the opportunity to develop his capacity, whatever that may be, to the fullest that can be done under the conditions of public education.

I think also that since we are schools serving a democratic culture that we have the responsibility to help young people, as they grow, to grow into habits, to grow into attitudes, to grow into the kinds of values that help them become effective participants in carrying the democratic heritage forward. These I would say are our main responsibilities.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Lynd, what would be your feeling on that?

**Mr. Lynd:** I think it should be

the job of the schools to train the minds of children just as far as they can possibly be trained and stretched by intellectual exercise. I agree with one word of Dr. Hullfish's—up to their capacity. I believe that children should learn all they can learn, at their age and capacity levels, of the civilization into which they have been born. I believe that if they learn to use their minds by intellectual exercise, and if they learn about the art and the letters and the civilization into which they have been born, then Democracy is safe enough.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, gentlemen, that brings us to a point which certainly is at the center of a great many of the controversies which we hear today on public education, and that is the battle raging over the content of public education. Now, do you feel that the traditional subjects such as spelling, reading, writing, languages and history, and mathematics, do you feel they are being neglected by our modern methods or are they being maintained in the traditional value?

**Dr. Hullfish:** You're looking at me, Mr. Moderator, and it seems that you do that every time you ask a question. I shall say what I believe and it will promptly be denied, I'm quite certain.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, I'm sure if I would look at Mr. Lynd and if he said what he believed, you would probably deny it, too, Doctor.

**Dr. Hullfish:** And I thought it would be so nice just once to be able to deny something instead of always having to affirm something. Nevertheless, I do want to say that in so far as I am able to come to a conclusion in terms of the literature that is relevant to this problem, that wherever it has



been possible, and it has been possible in a good many communities to give examinations today that were given 20-30 years ago in those same communities, the evidence, at least at that point, is that reading, writing, and arithmetic are being taught as well as they were taught earlier.

I think there is some evidence that spelling is not quite a thing that appeals to the youth today in such a way that he gives himself wholeheartedly to it. This does not mean that school people over this country are not *trying* to teach students to spell. They are.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:** Double-pronged answer, if I may. In the first place, I agree with Professor Bestor who says: "Are the three R's being taught today as well as they were before? They jolly well better be. The per capita investment is enormously higher than it was before." Secondly, I quote from Professor Kilpatrick, and then I want to know if any educator who is influenced by this is likely to have the same respect for arithmetic as an educator of 30 years ago. Mr. Kilpatrick says: "As I look out on life I find a lot of people who don't use arithmetic. I don't think that life would be any richer for them if they used it. They just don't need it."

**Dr. Hullfish:** Well, if we're going to deal with two-pronged answers, let me give one. Mr. Kilpatrick's perfectly right in relationship to a lot of people not needing arithmetic. On the other hand, the fact that Mr. Kilpatrick has said this (I have great admiration for Mr. Kilpatrick), in no way, so far as I understand it, commits all of Progressive Education, or all who are in Progressive Education, to that point of view.

I understand that the movements within the curriculum at the present time, which go by differing names, some of which you may know—the experience curriculum, the core curriculum, life adjustment, and so forth—that these movements are not movements designed at all to turn their back upon subject matter. They are movements designed so to catch up the interest of the student that subject matter comes to life in his life and he has use for arithmetic instead of simply having it where he may promptly forget it.

**Mr. Murray:** Gentlemen, before we went on the air we had here among our audience at Jamestown some expressions of opinion from people with respect to how the present content and methodology of education could be improved. And among those suggestions made by a young man who is a student now were some very practical ones and I wonder if you would care to comment upon them. Speaking as a senior high school student, he said first of all that he thought they should eliminate the excessive stress on electives in high school.

Secondly, he said that he thought they should cut out some of the extras. I presume possibly he meant the outside activities of the students. And thirdly, he stressed the fact that they should teach arithmetic to train the students to aim for the highest levels and bring the rest of the class up to them rather than create a low common denominator. Now here's criticism, or suggestions, shall I say, from a student and I wonder what your reaction would be—beginning with Mr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:** Well, of course, I do know the extent of the elective system in the high school in Jamestown. In general, I think at the high school level it should be seriously limited. I heard—if y



don't mind—something from Groucho Marx the other night . . .

**Dr. Hullfish:** Who is, of course, an expert on the matter.

**Mr. Lynd:** An educational expert, yes. He had a young man on there who admitted to being an undergraduate, I believe, at Los Angeles City College. He was majoring in dramatics, and his ambition was to become a comedian. He then proceeded to miss three or four geography questions, about the most difficult of which was the capital of Canada. Now I don't know—this boy was certified to a college in good standing—what he could possibly have learned in high school, or whether being a comedian met his felt needs better than learning the capital of Canada. But it occurs to me that that illustrates the abuse of the elective system. Lord knows what he took from high school to college.

**Mr. Murray:** Dr. Hullfish.

**Dr. Hullfish:** I won't compete with Groucho Marx. But I would like to introduce Mr. Gallup who has just conducted a poll in connection with the interests in this country of having the eighteen-year-old vote. He has conducted several polls. I refer to one released on the second of March, in which he asked a series of questions, pertinent questions, with reference to political information, both in terms of fact and in terms of interpretation of present legislation.

I only want to point out that in his poll the age group from 18 to 20 so far outruns all other age groups above them in this country that you cannot sell this present generation short as having been cheated by an elective system, which in fact in most schools is not so elastic as it seems. And you ought to know that Progressive Education in its effort to provide a

common base of knowledge in the high schools has been pressing and pressing hard the general education or the common experience, the common learning of students. It is not an advocate of free elections at any cost to the individual.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, gentlemen, I wonder if you would care in that line to evaluate what kind of a job our teachers colleges are doing. Mr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:** Well, the best of them are doing a good job and the poorest of them are doing an appalling job, I should say. It is incredible, the type of person who can come to a school system equipped with degrees from a teachers college. I mean incredible in their lack of education. The best are very good, and the worst are very, very poor. That is tough on the best of them. It would seem to me, looking at it from the point of view of a member of a local school system, that a sheaf of degrees in education means nothing in favor of the candidate who applies until you look at what's behind the degrees.

**Mr. Murray:** Dr. Hullfish.

**Dr. Hullfish:** I should think no degree from any institution, at any time, ever meant anything until you looked at what was behind it. I would point out only one thing. Some schools do better than other schools, and I am holding no brief with schools that do not do well, but I note that 80 per cent of the secondary school teachers have been trained in such a way that their subject matter training has been in colleges of liberal arts. At Ohio State University, our secondary school student trained to teach takes from 65 to 75 per cent of his courses in the liberal arts areas.

**Mr. Murray:** Well, gentlemen, as

you may know, each week America's Town Meeting presents a 20-volume set of the American People's Encyclopedia to the listener who submits the most provocative question pertinent to the topic under discussion. Our question this evening comes from Mrs. Edna Johnson of Duluth, Minnesota, and here is Mrs. Johnson's question: "Does modern education, with its emphasis on social attitudes, overstress getting along with people, thereby tending to make mediocrities and conformists out of our future citizens?" Mr. Lynd.

**Mr. Lynd:** I think there is a non sequitur there, as they used to say in the bad old days when they taught logic. I think it does overstress social relationships, but I don't think it necessarily makes mediocrities and conformists. I think it overstresses social relationships at the expense of training of the individual mind. I don't think it makes mediocrities. I don't think

you can make a mediocre person out of one who is not naturally mediocre.

**Mr. Murray:** Dr. Hullfish.

**Dr. Hullfish:** Well, I don't think, of course, that it makes a mediocrity, and I am not very happy about an answer which suggests that perhaps we ought to, in this world of 1954 when nations are having the difficulty that they are having getting along with each other, de-emphasize the social in education. Frankly, I myself thrill as I see young people in their relationships, in school and out of school and in the services and out of the services, getting along with others of differences in religion, and in race, and in economic status, in a way that you and I as adults have not been able to do. They hold the future of our relationships in their hands, and I think it's fairly safe at this moment.

**Mr. Murray:** Thank you, Dr. Hullfish.

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## QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

**Mr. Murray:** Now, gentlemen, we come to the question period of America's Town Meeting. Will you please tell us for whom your question is intended. The gentleman on my left, please.

**Questioner:** My question is addressed to Dr. Hullfish. In your opinion, is the present system of classification of students in the junior high schools into advanced, average, and retarded groups advantageous to the individual students?

**Dr. Hullfish:** As a matter of fact, I do not think that wherever

this system of classification exists that it's advantageous, because I think it does set up an in-group and an out-group. It creates attitudes that are not good. But I do not want to be misunderstood, sir, to have said that I have no feeling for, and hope for, our ability to do something in our schools so that this young man who spoke here tonight, and wants the bright student to have his chance to go just as far as he can go under his own steam, is denied that chance. I don't think we're going to get that in by the classification to which you refer.

*Mr. Murray:* May I have the next question, please?

*Questioner:* I address my question to Mr. Lynd. Should we educate for conformity or for critical objectivity?

*Mr. Lynd:* Well I have difficulty in believing that's a serious question. We should never educate for conformity.

*Mr. Murray:* Next question, please.

*Questioner:* My question is addressed to Dr. Hullfish. Does Progressive Education have no plan for setting up real and broad standards of actual achievement?

*Dr. Hullfish:* I would have said that if there is any one thing that Progressive Education has been working on it has been exactly the problem of setting up standards for "real" and "actual" achievement. This, as I understand it, all over this country where teachers who are involved in the Progressive Education movement, is one of the continuous jobs that they confront, because they are deeply concerned about how well they are doing. They must be, because there are so many critics ready to tell them that they are not doing well.

*Mr. Murray:* Thank you, Dr. Hullfish. And do we have another question? On my left, please.

*Questioner:* My question is directed to Mr. Lynd. Above us and in front of this auditorium, we are reminded that character is the first aim of education. How can we best accomplish this in our present educational system?

*Mr. Lynd:* The toughest of all questions. The formation of character depends on what your understanding of the nature of a human being is. It would differ widely.

It differs from one religious tradition to another. It differs from one educational theory to another. In Progressive Education, if I oversimplify Dr. Hullfish will correct me. Progressive Education tends to regard the individual as, so to speak, an organism subject to the formation of habits and the liberation of impulses toward good ends. It discounts what the older education regarded more important, that is the training of the mind, the Socratic idea that to know the right is to help to do the right, in the intellectual sense.

*Dr. Hullfish:* I must comment on it because while you have put your finger upon what I accept as fact, there is a difference in the conception of "mind." Progressive Education, in so far as it is related to the philosophy of the pragmatic outlook, conceives of the liberation of intelligence, that is to say the intelligent response in the solution of problems as the central aim and concern of its whole activity.

And this takes two forms: Intelligence in so far as the individual himself is concerned, being progressively brought up to ever higher levels of expression, and intelligence so far as the group is concerned, because we must learn, even as we learn our best as individuals, we must learn somehow to share this intelligence in common experiences so that as a people we can go forward together with more effectiveness.

*Mr. Lynd:* That's a succinct definition of Dewey, but you will concede that that definition of intelligence is a distinctly Deweyan definition and is not the same.

*Dr. Hullfish:* I concede only this much, sir, that in so far as I understand modern psychology, more



of modern psychologists are on my side than yours.

*Mr. Lynd:* Would it not be right to say that more psychologists who take their departure from Dewey are on your side?

*Dr. Hullfish:* No, I wouldn't put it that way at all, because I find more of the psychologists who do not take their departure from Dewey stand in this position.

*Mr. Lynd:* I haven't counted psychological heads.

*Mr. Murray:* Well, gentlemen, may we return to the question from the floor, please. The next question, please.

*Questioner:* I think my question might be well addressed to both Dr. Hullfish and Mr. Lynd. What are the best criteria for judging a student's success or failure? Mr. Lynd, would you care to comment first?

*Mr. Lynd:* The criteria surely have to be adjusted to the student. If there is an indication that a student could not meet the most strict demands of a curriculum, then let his mind or his capabilities be stretched to get some criteria he can be expected to meet. I would say to that extent I wholeheartedly agree with the Progressives. You wouldn't take a child with an intelligence quotient of 76 and make him learn bank discount or trigonometry. You must to that extent adjust the curriculum to the student, find the general indication of what a student of that level can meet, and reward him if he can make it and punish him if he can't.

*Mr. Murray:* Dr. Hullfish.

*Dr. Hullfish:* I had not expected to find that Mr. Lynd and I would eventually go around this barn and come out at the same place. I sub-

scribe to what he says. Your criteria, of course, come from what it is that you are trying to do. And to the degree that you are trying to bring each individual up to the level of his capacities, you must deal with the individual and you must not impose upon each of these growing lives some arbitrary standard that any large percentage may never be able to reach.

*Mr. Lynd:* Oh, I don't agree. There must be an arbitrary standard, but it must be one designed for . . . there are averages of experience.

*Dr. Hullfish:* I would say of course that any standard which is set off apart from the individuals whom you are judging is to that degree arbitrary.

*Mr. Lynd:* It mustn't be subjective.

*Mr. Murray:* Well, gentlemen, before taking the next question, may I remind those of you who are asking questions that if you do not feel satisfied with the response of our distinguished guests, please tell them so and make them answer the question more directly. And with that we will take the question from the next gentleman, please.

*Questioner:* Mr. Lynd, since you have little confidence in our present teacher training programs, and I do, I am interested, specifically in what you would use as a substitute.

*Mr. Lynd:* I am glad to answer. Give your prospective teacher good liberal arts education, so that he will know something about the civilization in which he lives. Take him and give him whatever more education you want.

*Mr. Murray:* Next question, please.

*Questioner:* My question is rather specific. I would be interested in knowing what both you gentlemen believe regarding a policy of advancing elementary pupils, failing elementary pupils, rather than holding them back a grade. Is my question clear?

*Dr. Hullfish:* I think your question is very clear. I doubt that any answer can be very clear. I would say to you that I do not myself find it good, educationally, to hold young people back in terms of their failure to meet the standards which others in the class may meet.

On the other hand, I think any time that you pass them along, if that is the way of saying it, that you take on a very real responsibility for seeing to it that they do not develop, in consequence of this act, an attitude that they may go through the whole educational system without engaging in any effort. I think our responsibility is always to take the youngster, whatever capacity he may have, and do our best to adjust ourselves to him so that within the levels of his ability he is constantly in process of learning.

*Mr. Lynd:* I think that one of the most wholesome reforms of modern education is to reduce the heartbreak of the unpromoted child. But I don't think it should be done at the expense of deluding the next class. Deal with him specially. I think there is no danger of democracy suffering if there are intellectual caste divisions within any given grade.

*Mr. Murray:* Thank you, gentlemen. Next question from the young lady on my left.

*Questioner:* Mr. Lynd, do you feel that the raising of salaries

alone will attract a greater number of young people into the teaching profession, where they are sorely needed?

*Mr. Lynd:* Not alone, but I think it's the indispensable requirement of any long term improvement.

*Questioner:* What else do you feel?

*Mr. Lynd:* A tightening up of teacher training qualifications.

*Dr. Hullfish:* I am very glad to hear him put it that way—a tightening up—because I had thought he meant a loosening up. But I do want to add one other thing, and I believe it's very important. I think teachers must have a sense of being important people in the communities of which they are a part, and too many communities do not give this recognition to teachers. You have to be a person, you have to feel that you are a person, in order to be happy and adequate in your job. I am convinced that if more young people in the classrooms of America were confronting teachers who had this sense of being happy in their work, more young people would want to go into that kind of work.

*Mr. Murray:* We have one minute left, gentlemen, and I think time for one more question, please.

*Questioner:* This question is addressed to Dr. Hullfish. In your opinion, is it possible to have a middle-of-the-road policy, somewhere between extreme Progressive Education and that type 50 years ago—namely, the three R's?

*Dr. Hullfish:* Well I think that Progressive Education, where it is true at all to the tenets on which it rests, is trying not to be extreme but to find a way in which, through the experience of young people,

those basic things that you call the three R's may be better taught than they have ever been taught.

*Mr. Lynd:* I see we accept the repentance of the extremist.

*Mr. Murray:* Well, gentlemen, I am very sorry we don't have time even to comment upon the expression of repentance, because our time has expired. I'd like to thank you, Professor Hullfish, and you, Mr. Lynd.

On behalf of Town Hall, I wish to thank our Jamestown hosts: Mr. John Hart, President of the Chamber of Commerce, and his co-chairmen for this event, J. Arthur Johnson and Wesley Nord; Louis Ives, President of the Junior Chamber of Commerce; David Berg, Executive Vice-President of the Senior Chamber. Our thanks also to Si Goldman and his staff at WJTN, ABC for the Jamestown area.



## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

(Continued from page 2)

degrees in 1922 and 1924. He became a member of the Ohio State faculty in 1922 and has held his present position since 1933.

Dr. Hullfish was elected to a three-year term as president of the American Education Fellowship (formerly the Progressive Education Association) in 1952. He served previously on its advisory board, as chairman of its commission on radio education. He was president of the Philosophy of Education Society in 1948, a member of its executive board from 1944-48, and was president of the Ohio Valley Philosophy of Education Society in 1951.

He was a member of the board of editors of the Journal of Educational Administration and Supervision for many years, and was on the board of directors of the Social Frontier and the executive board of the John Dewey Society. In 1949 he was re-elected to the Executive Board of that Society and in 1950 was elected vice-president. He was re-elected vice-president in 1951.

Dr. Hullfish has taught during summer sessions at Harvard University, the City College of New York, University of Hawaii and the University of California.

He is the co-author of several books, including: "The Educational Frontier," "Democracy in Transition," "The Community School," "Educational Freedom and Democracy," "Democracy in the Administration of Higher Education," and many others. He has also written numerous articles in professional journals.





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